

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-6. (Cancelled).

7. (Currently Amended) A method for authenticating a principal, comprising:
receiving an access request from a first principal for access to a second principal;
evaluating a contract to acquire a credential for the first principal;
transmitting the credential to the first principal for use in interacting with the second principal,
wherein the credential includes authentication information, aggregated attributes and aggregated
policies for use by the first principal in interacting with the second principal; The method of
claim 1 further comprising:

receiving a new request from the first principal for establishing a trust relationship with the second principal, wherein the trust relationship is established via communications having public-private key pairs between the first principal and the second principal;

determining if the trust relationship is permissible;

receiving a dynamically generated public key from the first principal associated with a dynamically generated private key, the dynamically generated private key maintained by the first principal; and

making the dynamically generated public key accessible to the second principal.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 further comprising:

receiving from a third principal a static rooted public key associated with the second principal; and

transmitting the static rooted public key to the first principal for use in interacting with the second principal in the trust relationship.

9-30. (Cancelled).

31. (New) The method of claim 7 further comprising, revoking the credential when an expiring event is detected.
32. (New) The method of claim 7 further comprising:
updating the contract in response to a permissible modification; and
deriving a modified credential from the updated contract.
33. (New) The method of claim 32 further comprising, transmitting the modified credential to the first principal for use in interacting with the second principal.
34. (New) The method of claim 7 further comprising:
detecting an event that renders the contract stale; and
revoking the credential.
35. (New) The method of claim 7 further comprising, expressing the certificate as one or more assertions.
36. (New) The method of claim 7 further comprising, accessing one or more identity stores to acquire the authentication information, the aggregated attributes, and the aggregated policies.
37. (New) The method of claim 36 further comprising, acquiring alias identity information in the credential acquired from the one or more identity stores.
38. (New) The method of claim 7 further comprising acquiring from the aggregated policies definitions for operations that are permissibly performed or not permitted during interactions between the first and the second principal.